



# *Milwaukee County*

Supervisor Michael Mayo, Sr., 7<sup>th</sup> District

1<sup>st</sup> Vice-Chairman, County Board

Chairman, Transportation, Public Works & Transit Committee

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For Immediate Release

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## **SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT ON SALES TAXES IN MILWAUKEE COUNTY**

*Supervisor Mayo asks County Executive to work with the County Board*

**Milwaukee, WI** – Milwaukee County Supervisor Michael Mayo, Sr., released the following statement in response to County Executive Scott Walker's veto of an advisory referendum on property tax relief and funding for transit, parks and emergency medical services (EMS):

“By vetoing this attempt to gather input from the public, the County Executive has demonstrated that he believes Milwaukee County government is a dictatorship, rather than a democracy. In his veto message, the County Executive accuses the County Board of failing to act on his idea to privatize the operation of General Mitchell International Airport. But, the truth is we have yet to receive a formal proposal from the County Executive. He is also asking that we take immediate action on proposals to move the County's Mental Health Complex to the former St. Michael Hospital and allow the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee to build an engineering school on the County Grounds in Wauwatosa. We are taking a close look at those preliminary proposals, but we will not make a decision until we have analyzed all the information. I personally will take as much time as necessary to get the best deal for our taxpayers. I will ensure that these projects will be win-wins for the residents of Milwaukee County.”

“The County Executive also stated that the Board could change how additional sales tax revenues are spent. I would point out that it was the County Executive, not the County Board, that initiated a change in the current County sales tax collections, using it for employee pensions and health care costs instead of its original purpose of debt service and capital improvements. In addition, the advisory referendum question includes property tax relief of \$67 million dollars, establishing a new tax levy base of approximately \$183 million, down from the current \$250 million. Due to limits set by the state, the levy could only increase by 2% of that lower base (or by the percentage increase in the County's equalized assessed value).”

“I ask the County Executive to come talk to us. Don't throw trial balloons out without working with the Board, and then claim the Board isn't willing to work together. Work with us, but don't simply tell us what to do. He is welcome to propose anything he desires, but it must come before the County Board for discussion. We are the policy makers. We must work together. We must agree to listen to the people.”